DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

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Das Schwarze Korps

ZEITUNG DER SCHUTZSTAFFELN DER NSDAP

England, wir kommen!

1940:
"England We're Coming"

screamed the central SS newspaper "Schwarze Korps" on August 8th 1940, when Hitler wanted to invade Britain.

1961: "Sieg Heil: We've Come"

(Specially drawn for German Report by Elizabeth Shaw)

ULBRICHT ANSWERS QUESTIONS

"Evening Standard":

What advice would you give to Kennedy, Macmillan, de Gaulle and Khrushchov to consider before they sit down to negotiate on the German question?

Walter Ulbricht:

If you ask me what I would wish these four statesmen to consider, I would say this: may they develop constructive ideas and proposals how to remove finally the vestiges of the Second World War in Germany, and how to ensure peace and security.

Our German Peace Plan *(see German Report, July 21st)* is a contribution to the solution of these questions, and in future, too, we shall not fail to do our part in securing peace. Our Peace Plan includes proposals whose implementation would bring peace and security to the German people as well as to all of Germany's neighbours.

We are in absolute agreement with Soviet Premier Khrushchov on universal and complete disarmament and on the German Peace Treaty. I would wish the leading statesmen of the Western powers to make a careful and unprejudiced study of our German Peace Plan before they sit down to negotiate the question of Germany. This could facilitate the peaceful solution of questions still at issue today.

"Standard":

Herr Ulbricht, do you consider that the question of Germany is a real threat to the peace of the world?

Ulbricht:

What is the German question? You speak of the German question because the government in Bonn is putting forward revanchist demands, because it wants to revise the borders of some of the People's Democracies and the borders of the Soviet Union as well and because militarism in West Germany has become a threat not only to the German people but to all nations. Developments in West Germany, unlimited preparations for a war of revenge by the West German imperialists, their war minister and their Hitler generals — that is a real, a serious threat to the peace of the world. In a similar manner Hitler prepared his war of revenge approximately 23 years ago.

Of course, some things are different nowadays. A basic change has taken place in the balance of power. Today there is on one hand the German Democratic Republic, the peaceful German state, which represents the national interests of the German people and which makes its impact on historic development; on the other hand there is the militarist West German state.

On July 31st Walter Ulbricht, Chairman of the State Council of the GDR, was interviewed by Mr Mark Wilson of the London "Evening Standard". A few disjointed scraps of the interview were published by the "Evening Standard" on the following day. Because of the importance of this authoritative GDR view of the present dispute on the problems of Germany and West Berlin, GERMAN REPORT published on these pages a fuller report of the interview.

We must take notice of the fact that since the conclusion of the Paris Treaties, this West German state has been increasingly transformed into a NATO state. In view of the fact that the Bonn government — and the ruling party, the CDU, in its basic declaration adopted recently — have set forth that in their view a German national state is no longer possible but only a NATO state under US leadership — there is but one way to preserve peace today: a peace treaty must endorse the frontiers and states which arose after the Second World War and which have now been in existence for more than a decade. Simultaneously this will declare that revanchist policies have no prospects of success and that any military infringement of the GDR borders would be a violation of law and of the United Nations Charter and could have serious consequences.

The efforts on the part of some politicians of the Western powers to evade recognition of the situation as it really is, a situation of which they are well aware, appears naive. Like the pious childish belief that one can keep a tiger that has tasted blood as a docile domestic animal, a number of politicians of the Western powers — including a great many in Britain and France — support the incorrigible West German militarists and even open their own countries to them for military invasion. In 1945 Hitler would not have dreamed that his panzers would after all land in the British Isles.

Is Britain not aware that the policy of the ruling circles of the West German Federal Republic aims at creating a situation whereby Britain, the USA and France would be drawn by the West German militarists into their war of revenge?

I have heard it said that Britain is one of the victors of the Second World War. That must be a mistake. Only a few days ago the West German War Minister Strauss declared in the USA that for him the Second World War had not yet ended. Hearing that West German troops are marching in France and that West German panzers will rumble through Britain, one is almost inclined to believe him.

What is the aim of the Bonn government and its Hitlerite generals? As Herr Strauss says, they want to continue the war by drawing the USA, Great Britain, France and other NATO states into an adventure, the aim of which is to reverse the results of the Second World War. They want to continue on the road of Hitlerite adventure in a new coalition and with a changed front. But even now that does not stop them from using pressure on some of the partners of this new coalition.

Take a look at the foreign trade statistics. They are very revealing. West German exports to the Sterling area — excluding Britain — increased from 537 million dollars to 932 million dollars between 1955 and 1960. But Britain's share in Indian imports fell from 24.4% in 1954 to 19.5% in 1959. During the same period West Germany's share increased from 6.2% to 13.4%. The same development is visible in the foreign trade of the Union of South Africa and other Sterling area countries. Between 1953 and 1960 British exports increased by about 39% altogether, but West German exports by about 160%. In 1953 British exports were still 63% higher than West Germany's. In 1960, however, they were 13% below those of West Germany. Britain is spending 700 to 800 million marks in foreign currency for support costs of the British Army of the Rhine on West German territory.

You see, from the point of view of the balance of payments this is a kind of foreign currency subsidy to West Germany without reciprocity.

This is all part of the causes of the present serious economic difficulties with which your country has to wrestle. At the same time the West German militarist state — which has for more than one decade fattened on US dollars and British Sterling — is adopting an increasingly insolent attitude towards its own allies.

I wish to assure you that we have the highest respect for the work-

Stop Press:

New Frontier Regulations

The Government of the German Democratic Republic introduced new regulations governing passage between the GDR and West Berlin on August 13th. The effect of the new regulations was to convert into a normal frontier the hitherto existing and anomalous "open border" between East and West Berlin.

The official GDR announcement stated:

"In order to prevent the hostile activity of the revenge-seeking and militarist forces of West Germany, controls similar to those on the frontier of every sovereign state will be imposed between the German Democratic Republic and West Berlin."

Under the new regulations, citizens of the German Democratic Republic wishing to visit West Berlin will have to apply for a permit, just as citizens of most states have to apply for passports or other documents when proceeding to a point outside state territory.

Although the state border of the GDR has now been drawn right through the centre of Berlin, some of the special features of the "open frontier" have been retained. West Berliners and foreign visitors to either half of the divided city can still cross the border without any special formalities.

The GDR Government announcement stressed that transit traffic between West Germany and West Berlin was not affected in any way by the new regulations. The regulations would remain in force until the conclusion of a peace treaty, it was officially announced.

The Warsaw Pact states (Soviet Union and the socialist states of Europe) simultaneously issued an announcement approving of the special measures taken by the GDR Government. "The Governments of the Warsaw Pact states realise that the security measures on the frontiers of West Berlin will cause some inconvenience to the population; but the blame for this lies entirely with the western powers, and above all the Government of the West German Federal Republic," this announcement said. "The West Berlin frontier has hitherto been held open in the hope that the western powers would not misuse the good will of the Government of the GDR. However these powers misused the state of affairs on the West Berlin frontier for subversive purposes."

The GDR Government announcement of the new frontier regulations stressed that the basic rulings of the Potsdam Agreement on the elimination of militarism and nazism had not been applied in West Germany and West Berlin, and that as a result, German militarism had once again become a threatening force. West Berlin was increasingly being used as a basis from which citizens of the GDR were being press-ganged and recruited away. Such activities from West Berlin were directed not only against the German Democratic Republic, but also against other socialist states, the statement said.

(For more details on press-ganging and subversion, see next page)

manship of the British people, for their efficiency, tenacity and courage. But the perilous support of the West German militarists and their revanchist policy by the governments of the Western powers cannot but evoke a feeling of bitterness in those of us who are German anti-fascists and opponents of militarism.

"Standard":

Both the American and the British governments have stated that the German question could cause a Third World War, should it be mishandled. Do you think so, and if so, what is your suggestion for avoiding it?

Ulbricht:

I have explained already that it is my conviction that both the American and the British governments are pursuing a dangerous policy in giving support to the West German militarists and the Hitler generals in their craving for atomic arms and in their revenge policy. That is an extreme threat to peace, indeed. You wish to know **our** solution. Well, the question of Germany should be handled **properly.** By concluding a peace treaty with both German states the dangerous vestiges of the Second World War should be removed and in this manner a halt be called to the West German revanchist politicians. This would give both German states the opportunity to disarm completely and to secure military neutrality by international agreement. Then no one need fear any longer that a new world war could again be sparked from German territory. The two German states themselves, and without foreign intervention, could solve the problems of their mutual relations and of overcoming the division of the nation.

"Standard":

Will you give me your version of the reported movement of people leaving East Germany to live in West Germany? There are West German claims that the figure is one thousand per day. Is this true?

Ulbricht:

Such claims are part of the psychological warfare against the GDR.

For many years the migration of GDR citizens to West Germany has not been a mere exodus or emigration for this or that reason, but an integral part of cold war, of slave trade, psychological warfare and sabotage directed against the German Democratic Republic. This is no political emigration but a dirty trade in human beings conducted with the most detestable methods in which the Bonn authorities, West German monopoly capital and US espionage agencies – mostly working from West Berlin – have invested big amounts of money. Since the decision to grant high pensions to old nazis in West Germany – in our state they must earn their daily bread by honest work – many people with a bad political record have also gone to the West. The organisations which carry on this trade in persons shrink from no criminal methods, blackmail nor compulsion, not even from kidnapping.

In connection with our efforts to secure peace, Bonn and the American agencies have intensified their organised trading in human beings in recent months. The aim is to discredit the German Democratic Republic and to delay its development. We shall not remain inactive in view of the unprecedented intensification of psychological warfare, the guided traffic in

persons, and sabotage. In the long run the policy of trading in human beings will prove a boomerang to the West German revanchist politicians.

"Standard":

When you say that the German question must be handled properly, do you mean that a peace treaty should be concluded with both German states?

Ulbricht:

That is the solution I heartily desire, since it would be the starting point for a solution of the German problem. The conclusion of a peace treaty with the two German states would mean that the ruling circles in West Germany would have to end their revenge propaganda.

"Standard":

Do you believe that it is necessary to set a time limit for the conclusion of a peace treaty? Can this be done slowly, or is it necessary to do it this year or next year?

Ulbricht:

I think that we have already approached this question very slowly. The Soviet Union made its proposals two and a half years ago. The time has now come when there can be no more delay. Any further delay would only help the West German militarists. Herr Strauss states that the West German Army is today armed 50% with atomic weapons. To complete atomic armament he needs another two years, until about the end of 1962 ...

I would not like to assume that the British people or the British Government allow the Bonn militarists to dictate the course of events in Europe. I believe that there is a large measure of agreement between us on this question. We want peace, and the British people want peace.

* * *

At the end of the interview, Walter Ulbricht requested the British journalist to tell the British people that the citizens of the German Democratic Republic were honestly interested in making peace in Europe secure. "In two world wars I have fought against German militarism" said Walter Ulbricht. "I know what war means, and I know the aggressive and barbarous character of German militarism. We would like the British people to understand that the vital question for the German people is the question of overcoming German militarism. The British people should prevent any measures being taken which support German militarism, since this would increase the danger which German militarism represents both for the German people and for the British people."

Background to New Measures

The Government of the German Democratic Republic will take "suitable measures" to stop the recruitment and press-ganging of GDR citizens to West Germany, it was officially announced on August 11th. Details of the measures to be taken were not immediately announced.

In a speech to the People's Chamber on August 11th, Deputy Prime Minister Willi Stoph outlined the reasons which made it necessary to take special measures to guarantee and guard socialist construction in the GDR.

"In their hatred of the workers' and peasants' government in the GDR, the West German imperialists and militarists are using the most contemptible methods" Stoph said.

"The worst methods used are the current press-gang tactics used to recruit citizens of the German Democratic Republic. These methods, this trade in human beings, are examples of the 'genuine nuisances' referred to recently by President Kennedy, factors which must be removed if relations are to be normalised.

Deputy Prime Minister Stoph then gave examples of the methods being used by western agencies and firms.

"These modern 'head-hunters' send countless letters to citizens of the GDR in their attempts to recruit them. They also misuse visits paid by GDR citizens to conferences and congresses in West Berlin and West Germany for organising such recruitment. In May, for example, organised attempts were made to lure away GDR doctors in the course of a congress on medical education in West Berlin.

"A wide-spread network of specialised organisations for luring away GDR citizens has been established. Large sums of money are made available to pay bonuses for each person recruited by the 'head-hunters' and for bribery and corruption. The recruiters get bonuses for each person they lure away, and the bonuses are graded according to the importance of the person recruited.

"Every citizen of the GDR who falls into the trap is worked over by the various espionage services, with all methods of pressure and blackmail, until he commits treason against the GDR, and reveals any economic secrets he may possess.

"In all this, a special role is played by West Berlin, which lies in the centre of our Republic.

"What are the real objects of this campaign? By means of this campaign, its organisers obtain cheap labour, which has been trained in the GDR at the cost of the workers and peasants; young people are lured away from their steady work and secure prospects, and faced with an uncertain future in the NATO forces or the French Foreign Legion; other people are recruited into espionage organisations."

Deputy Prime Minister Stoph then drew a comparison between the present western campaign, and the campaign launched by the nazis in 1938 and 1939 when they organised "mass flight" of so-called Folk Germans from the frontier areas of Czechoslovakia and Poland in order to make psychological preparations for the military attacks on those countries. "The 'Ultras' of Bonn are using the same methods today in order to prepare the ground for a military attack on the German Democratic Republic," he said.

At the end of his speech, he appealed to young and old, men and women, to help prevent the cold warriors from interfering with our lives and our work of reconstruction.

"We are convinced," he said, "that just as we repelled all attacks by our enemies in the past, all the plans of the recruiters and headhunters will be stopped by our unified action."

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With Americans Through the GDR

By Allen Mann

The other week I had the opportunity to be guide and interpreter to a large group of Americans visiting the GDR. I am still hoarse from the job, but it was well worth it. For I had lived in the GDR for many years and grown thoroughly accustomed to life here, and this was a chance to see the country through the eyes of strangers.

One thing soon became apparent as we travelled from one city to another. Even progressive people in America knew almost nothing about the GDR. Most western papers print only the hair-raising stories supplied them by West German agencies and propaganda offices; even the left-wing press usually has enough other worries to keep it from spending much space on this little country with its present very crucial history and geography.

The first pleasant impression the visitors received on their visit into this "new land" was at the Wilhelm Pieck Pioneer Republic. This is an all-year-round children's camp north of Berlin, with pleasant houses, an open-air theatre, a little zoo, arts and crafts workshops and a big, blue lake for swimming and boating. What the visitors liked most was the warm, friendly and unselfconscious way the children greeted them at their arrival, with little bouquets and natural words of welcome. Many of their reservations about visiting Germany, the land of Hitler, the SS and the Gestapo, were weakened thoroughly after they met these German children and saw how well they got along with children from France, Ghana, Mongolia and other parts of the world.

* * *

A few days later we drove eastwards from Berlin to visit Stalinstadt, a town housing workers from the great new iron mill there. Both town and industrial plant were built just ten years ago on what was then deserted scrub-pine area. Today the 24,000 inhabitants have wide streets, pleasant self-service stores and modern schools, a theatre and a big hospital.

The one apartment we visited in Stalinstadt was not so modern by American standards, it turned out. But, as one of the American women pointed out, it was necessary to compare things not with America, a rich country undamaged by wars for a hundred years — but with the past standards of the country itself. And it was necessary to consider the rents. Four rooms and bath with central heating and built-in kitchen furnishings cost 58 marks a month, less than 1/10th of the husband's pay alone, and both adults in the family worked.

The restaurant where we ate lunch in Stalinstadt was nearly filled with youngsters between 7 and 12 years of age, eating in a surprisingly dignified and well-mannered way for their age, though they were by no means meek or subdued. On inquiring, we found that they were on a summer day camp outing from a nearby town. Children in the GDR go for three weeks to summer camps in the country in most cases, and spend the rest of the holidays at these day camps, with games, outings or arts and crafts. Both kinds of camp cost next to nothing.

Later that day we visited the Oder River, to look over into Poland and see the frontier about which there has been so much shouting. This is the border recognised officially by the GDR but rejected by the West German government and by dozens of loud-mouthed West German hate organisations. Both sides of the river looked very green and peaceful. Barges of both Poland and the GDR plied their way up and down the river under the eyes of black and white checked cows, some German, some Polish.

On the way to the Oder we crossed a small canal by ferry. Nearby was a bombed-out bridge, and the ferry was still being operated by manual labour (it was pulled across by a cable). Here was one of those contrasts one finds everywhere in the GDR. A huge new industrial complex and a gleamingly modern new city, known as "Germany's first socialist town", and almost within stone-throw, remnants of a backward past.

We found the same contrast while driving through the countryside. The Americans were rather surprised to see groups of women working in the sugar beet fields with hoes or other hand tools. Then, most of the villages looked as if they had not changed in many, many years, especially if one could not understand the signs indicating kindergartens, libraries, cultural clubs and cooperatives. But as our bus drove further and further through farming country, we also saw more and more groups of tractors, combines and all kinds of farming equipment working busily in the big fields.

Here is where I was in a good position to draw comparisons. Five or six years ago, one saw far fewer machines. And the fields in those days were mostly little strips, each one with a different crop, each one farmed by a different family and most of them too small for mechanised farming. Since then the farms have been pooled, and the GDR's infant farm equipment industry, built up from nothing since the war, has become highly productive.

After the dismal reports which all the visitors had read about the country and especially its agriculture, the wide fields of billowing grain, the endless rows of green potato or sugar beet plants, the yellow rapeseed and the lush clover showed how one can be fooled by newspaper distortions. Aside from the meadows and the miles of forests, I don't believe we saw an untilled acre anywhere.

* * *

Our group spent many days in Leipzig, the GDR's second largest city, taking trips from there to other towns and cities further south.

Nearly everyone liked Leipzig better than Berlin. Almost all war damage has been repaired here, the new and renovated buildings are more conspicuous than in Berlin, which is not so centralised, and there is also more charm and atmosphere in the narrow old streets and winding passageways. Then, too, there is certainly more night life in the central part of Leipzig than in the widespread districts of East Berlin. And yet the night spots were all overcrowded — not only on weekends but during the week as well.

"And we were told that people in East Germany live dismal, fearful lives cooped up in their own four walls," one American told me in the lobby of a dance hall, as bursts of laughter and music drifted out to us. We were still looking for seats in some night club or other place of entertainment.

Before we left Leipzig we did manage to visit several of them. There was the Kaffeebaum, built in 1694, and visited by Schumann, Goethe, Mendelssohn and Wagner. This is a very informal place despite the treasured table where Schumann always sat with his young musician

friends. People played loudly at dice or skat, Germany's favourite card game. Four such card-players invited one of the Americans with me to ring an old bell which hung in one rather obscure corner. He did, and the four all began to laugh and to tell him in accented but unambiguous English that he now had to pay for a round of drinks. There was no getting around it, that was the strict tradition here, they said. He paid (and heavily) and will certainly never forget that bell.

A night spot with even more tradition is Auerbach's Keller, which Germany's great poet Goethe mentioned in his play "Faust". It was here that Mephistopheles drew wine from a table, according to Goethe. The delicious Hungarian Tokay wine we had was not from the table, but it did the trick just as well.

There are other newer spots, too, but I think most Americans preferred those riper with tradition — as do I.

Talking about entertainment, by the way, one of the group from California showed me a cutting from a hometown newspaper about how "the East German reds have launched a massive campaign to cut down the jokes and the animals in circuses and twist them into private propaganda shows."

"We visited a circus here," he told me. "There were clowns, jokes, and every kind of animal from chimpanzees to elephants. Where do they get that kind of story?" I showed him. The story was datelined Hanover — in West Germany.

More western stories were exposed in relation to the "food shortage" in the GDR. True, there were queues, especially early in the morning outside fruit and vegetable stores. There were shortages on some items, like new potatoes, which were late in coming because of the unusually rainy season. But queues and shortages of some foods are nothing new here, nor do they amount to a general shortage; it was clear that there was plenty of food for everyone everywhere; the stores were filled with both commodities of all sorts and with shoppers, and the weight of both gave the lie to the hunger stories. More than one American said that Germans seemed to eat too much, especially butter.

The one thing the Americans missed was ice water with their meals. Waiters generally stared at requests for water, or brought mineral or seltzer water instead. When they finally did bring regular water, it was usually about half a very small glass of luke-warm water.

But hot water also made difficulties. The Astoria Hotel in Leipzig where we stayed has been re-built and greatly expanded in the past five years, and is a handsome hotel. But it too was beset by some of the troubles typical of the GDR's rapidly, but jerkily expanding economy. My pleasant room, like those of several other guests, had a beautiful bathroom and tub, but without hot water. We had to shop around and find others in our group whose bathtubs were supplied with this commodity. The affair was made even more intriguing because the hotel has so many single rooms (since businessmen coming to the Leipzig Fair usually travel alone) and many of the married couples were in separate rooms.

* * *

In Leipzig there was a large meeting where the Americans spoke with Germans on a wide variety of subjects. They learned how sincere and genuine many people in the GDR were in their hatred of fascism and their belief in building up a new socialist society. The Americans also discovered that there were five parties in the GDR and not just one, although all five are agreed on most basic questions. Lastly the meeting showed the untruth of lies which have occasionally been spread about anti-Semitism or pro-nazis here. Members of the little Jewish community of Leipzig and old underground fighters and concentration camp inmates proved these points to the satisfaction of everyone.

There was, alas, a negative feature to this meeting, too. Many comments which should have been made in a few words, turned into long speeches. Indeed, endless meetings with lots of repetition are a curse in this country, although I must point out that a few Americans were almost as guilty in this respect.

To sum up the first instalment of this report: the visitors found that in the GDR, as in most countries, there was lots of good and bad, there were some modern features and some primitive, with lots of promise for the future. They all would agree, I am sure, that the western press had always given a completely one-sided and distorted picture of the country. Getting a deeper picture of conditions here requires time and knowledge of the language and customs, but most foreign reports had not even tried to present the superficial truth.

NKRUMAH IN GDR

Ghana's President Kwame Nkrumah paid a lightning visit to East Berlin on August 1st during his summer tour of eastern European countries. He met with leading government figures of the German Democratic Republic for discussions of current political questions, attended a reception given in his honour and was awarded an honorary doctorate by Humboldt University.

During the discussions, President Nkrumah expressed his understanding for the wish of the GDR to conclude a peace treaty for Germany and spoke up for the need for peace and security in the world.

In reply, Deputy Premier Bruno Leuschner said that "the GDR is on the side of Ghana in the struggle to eliminate the remains of colonialism and for the complete liberation of Africa".

President Nkrumah was accompanied on his visit by Cabinet Minister Krobo Edusei and Minister of State Tawia Adamafio.

Visitors from All Over

Ten Cubans wounded while resisting the US-sponsored attack on their country last April are coming to Democratic Germany for medical treatment by GDR specialists. Another thirty wounded Cubans are expected to follow.

* * *

A group of leading Buddhists from the Union of Burma visited the GDR at the end of July. The guests, who spoke with bishops and other leading religious leaders and visited memorial sites and the main cities of the country, included U Chan Thoon, President of the Buddhist World Federation, the Venerable U Kovida, General Secretary of the Association of Religious Priests and Head Abbot of the Sein Yaung Chai Temple, and other top Buddist personalities.

* * *

Italian Socialist Party M.P.s who had toured the German Democratic Republic in late July promised to help spread the true facts about the GDR when they returned home. They advocated agreement on a peace treaty with Germany and a solution of the West Berlin problem and said that they believed Italy should recognise the GDR.

VOICES OF REASON

An increasing number of responsible western newspapers and magazines have spoken up recently for reason in the treatment of the German problem, and in particular the question of West Berlin. Here are extracts from some of these voices of reason: GERMAN REPORT does not identify itself with all the opinions expressed:

"The Observer", London

"First, it may be worth while recalling that the principle of negotiation over Berlin is not in dispute. Secondly, a closer examination of the proposals already made may show that, at this stage at least, what is required from the West is not so much greater courage as clearer political thinking ...

"Both sides obviously have little expectation of a complete all-German settlement. Any negotiation would be likely to narrow down to the status of Berlin. But there are two aspects of an all-German settlement which could provide an element in negotiations. They might be used to produce, so to speak, an interim peace treaty for Germany within which the present status of West Berlin might be strengthened. These two elements are Germany's frontiers and her military status.

"But in what way could West Berlin's present status be improved? If Mr Khrushchev's purpose is to weaken the Western position in Berlin, why should he make an agreement which would strengthen it?

"There is, however, less incompatibility of purpose here if one assumes that Mr Khrushchev's aim is primarily to stabilise his own position in Eastern Germany. The expulsion of the West from Berlin is not the **only** way to achieve this, though it would undoubtedly help him. There is not an **inevitable** clash between some improvement of the Western position in Berlin and some strengthening of Eastern Germany's position – unless it is assumed that the Western aim in West Berlin is not merely to protect the freedom of its citizens but also to weaken the position of the East German regime.

"Let us then assume that the essential western aim in West Berlin is to preserve the freedom and independence of its people ...

"This analysis suggests that a possible bargain for the West might, for example, combine the following points: –

"1) An interim peace settlement for the whole of Germany, defining her frontiers, including the Oder-Neisse line, and placing a ceiling on her armaments. This agreement would, if necessary, be made separately with Western and Eastern Germany. German internal relations would be preserved and the Western Powers would not formally recognise Eastern Germany. Each German state would remain in its respective military alliance but a Central European zone of limited arms under control and inspection would be established.

"2) An interim settlement for Berlin pending the conclusion of a full German peace treaty. Allied occupation rights would be incorporated in a new international agreement, to which Eastern Germany and the Soviet Union would adhere, guaranteeing access rights for both civilian and military traffic to and from West Berlin ...

"If the real desire of both sides is to make the status quo safer, rather than to keep open possibilities of risky adventure – whether on Mr Khrushchev's side the eventual take-over of West Berlin or on the Western side the eventual liberation of Eastern Germany – then such a limited agreement might be within reach."

(Robert Stephens, Diplomatic Correspondent, "The Observer", July 30th)

"The Nation", New York

"Nor is it clear – and this is to put it mildly – that there is any validity in the argument, so assiduously propagated in Bonn, that West Berlin is in fact a detached but integral part of the West German Republic ... The neutral observer is far more likely to conclude that Berlin is East German territory, in which, for special reasons, the United States, Great Britain and France have the right to station troops; and though this view may be unacceptable to us, we must take it into account if we are to have any hope of winning world support for our stand in the city. If the roles were reversed and we were dealing with a Communist enclave behind our front line, it seems certain that by this time we should have found some means of squeezing it out of existence ...

"When we look in detail at the Soviet statements, we find that the Soviet 'threat', which has been inflated into a full-scale attack on the Western position in Berlin, amounts in reality to a demand that access to Berlin should be regulated 'on the basis of respective agreements with the German Democratic Republic' ... In other words, what we call the Berlin question turns out to be the question of East Germany in disguise.

"If, after the threatened Russian peace treaty with the German Democratic Republic, the Western powers were prepared to negotiate an agreement with the East German Government safeguarding their rights of access to Berlin, the crisis would immediately subside. If – which would be far more sensible – they can reach an agreement over Berlin in the next six months, signed by East and West Germany as well as the four occupying powers, it need not arise at all ...

"The prestige of the West, it is often said, is at stake, and there is truth in the contention. But the West will not gain prestige by clinging blindly to outworn dogmas, such as non-recognition of the East German Government."

(Geoffrey Barraclough in "The Nation", July 15th)

"Today", London

"(The West Berliners) cannot blame us for the dilemma in which they find themselves. After all, the Germans started the war which caused all the trouble ...

"It is possible that our leaders hold a trump card in their hand, although they show no signs of understanding how to play it ...

"Our trump card is East Germany. Ever since the German Democratic Republic was established in October, 1949, the Western Powers have made an earnest but rather stupid pretence that it does not exist. They have done this because the West German Government, in return for providing NATO with fourteen German divisions ... have forced the Western Allies to agree in theory to the reunification of Germany ... It is dishonest for Western politicians to appease Dr Adenauer by prattling about free elections which can never take place. But if the Western Powers were to offer to recognise the German Democratic Republic, which has now existed, whether we like it or not, for twelve years, they might in return get equally large concessions from Russia ...

"It is on this basis that the West should show a readiness to negotiate with every likelihood that Khrushchev would be ready to give a quid pro quo."

(From an article entitled "Would YOU Die for West Berlin?" by Ewan Butler in "Today", Britain's largest illustrated, on July 29th)

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

The news about the new regulations on the frontier between West Berlin and the surrounding German Democratic Republic came too late for us to be able to give it much space in this issue of GERMAN REPORT, but I hope that I can still get a comment on this page, amidst the gnashing of teeth of compositors and stone-hands tearing up their time-schedules.

The new frontier bang though the centre of the city will, quite frankly, be a nuisance to most people in both parts of Berlin, because it will mean that a number of important underground railway lines and elevated railway lines will have to be diverted. Early on Sunday morning when the news broke I visited or called several people, and found that most of them had been studying city maps seeing whether they would have to change their route to work on Monday morning.

But apart from this, the new regulations will have practically no effect on the ordinary peaceable citizens of the city. The people who have been made mad are the currency speculators; the smugglers, both the petty Saturday afternoon smugglers and the big-time operators; and of course the professional cloak and dagger boys. Incidentally, Mr Allen Dulles' particular bunch of crew-cut wash'n-wear flat-feet kept up their good record of total inefficiency with regard to the latest Berlin moves. The operation of establishing a properly manned frontier through the heart of a big city in the space of a very few hours is an organisational and logistic problem of very big proportions. It calls for excellent staff work, and literally thousands of people in the GDR must have known details well in advance of the deadline. Yet I am reliably informed that the US CIA, which has its agents remarkably thick on the ground in West Berlin was still happily filing reports to Washington that "nothing is going to happen in Berlin this week", half-an-hour after the first new frontier posts were established.

(For details about who was paying cable-tolls for these reports, see below. Please remember that what follows, and other stories in this issue, were in type before the new frontier regulations went into force.)

* * *

The anomalous situation in West Berlin is full of odd and unsuspected angles: there is none odder, perhaps, than the fact that the poor tax payers of the German Democratic Republic have to cough up well over a million pounds a year to subsidise the Western troops stationed in West Berlin.

This curious subsidy comes about like this: when the western allied troops moved into West Berlin two months after the end of the war, an arrangement was made with the Soviet forces by which special telephone cables between West Berlin and West Germany should be made available to the British, American and French commands. At that time, quite rightly and properly, the local German authorities had to pay for the maintenance of these lines as part of the occupation costs, just as they paid for the cable facilities used by the Soviet forces.

Since 1955, when the payment of occupation costs for the Soviet troops stationed in Germany has ended, the Soviet authorities have been paying normally fees for any of the GDR's communication facilities which they use. The British and Americans, however, have merrily gone on using the lines, which have to be maintained and serviced by the German Democratic Republic. And the sum due is not just a few odd marks: the fee due from the US authorities amounts today to over one million marks monthly, and that due from the British forces, which apparently do not use the phone so much, is just over half a million marks monthly. The grand total comes to 18 million marks annually, which is just about one and a half million pounds sterling. It looks as though a big phone bill will be going in to Washington and London sometime soon.

The unpaid phone-bill racket is not the only one, I understand. Apparently the western military trains which chug up and down the GDR railway lines between West Germany and West Berlin also do so at cut rates fixed sixteen years ago. I feel sorry for the British tax-payers if this bird comes home to roost, but I feel sure that the German Democratic Republic would be only too happy to forget about the unpaid bills if the unwanted western troops in West Berlin would pack up and go home.

And I would like to emphasise that these drags on the economy of the GDR are only a very small part of the price which the Democratic Republic has to pay for the existence of West Berlin in its present form. Economists here have calculated recently that the various forms of currency speculation and smuggling which have their origin in the present unsatisfactory status of West Berlin cost the GDR the vast total of at least one thousand million marks annually: that is about £90,000,000. And all this, of course, comes out of the pockets of the workers of the GDR.

* * *

The British Broadcasting Corporation runs a special German-language service for the "Soviet Zone of Germany", as it chooses to call the German Democratic Republic. I think that most people in Britain would be shocked and angry if they could hear some of the programmes put out in this special service, which quite openly and without the usual BBC "objectivity" slander the GDR and do all they can to undermine its stability. I have quoted some specific examples from time to time in the past, particularly in "Berlin Notebook" on August 1st 1958, and will not repeat them here.

But I should like to tell you a little about one remarkable "refugee from red oppression" who has recently been a star performer on this specialised BBC programme. This star performer is a young man of 22 named Peter Probst, whose claim to fame is that his father, with whom I deeply sympathise, is Deputy Minister of Posts in the GDR Government.

In a whole series of heart-rending speeches broadcast by the BBC, young Peter Probst claimed that he had been "forced to flee from the GDR because of fundamental differences with its shameless system". It all sounds very romantic, but the facts are different. Peter Probst left the GDR because he had managed, in the past few months, to get himself engaged to three different young women simultaneously; and after giving them written promises of marriage he had then proceeded to make them pregnant. To avoid multiple bigamy, or a whole series of breach of promise cases, he decided to become a "refugee".

In citing this case I don't mean to suggest that all the people leaving the GDR abandon three pregnant brides: but Peter Probst does seem a queer person to become a BBC hero.

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